



May 2013

Diverse, Responsible & Connected

Issue #5

*Flow of the Peace
"Current Eddies"*

Upcoming Dates & Events

Information Session & Display—June 12, 2013 at 3-5 pm Grande Cache Mall

What Flows

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What is a Watershed?

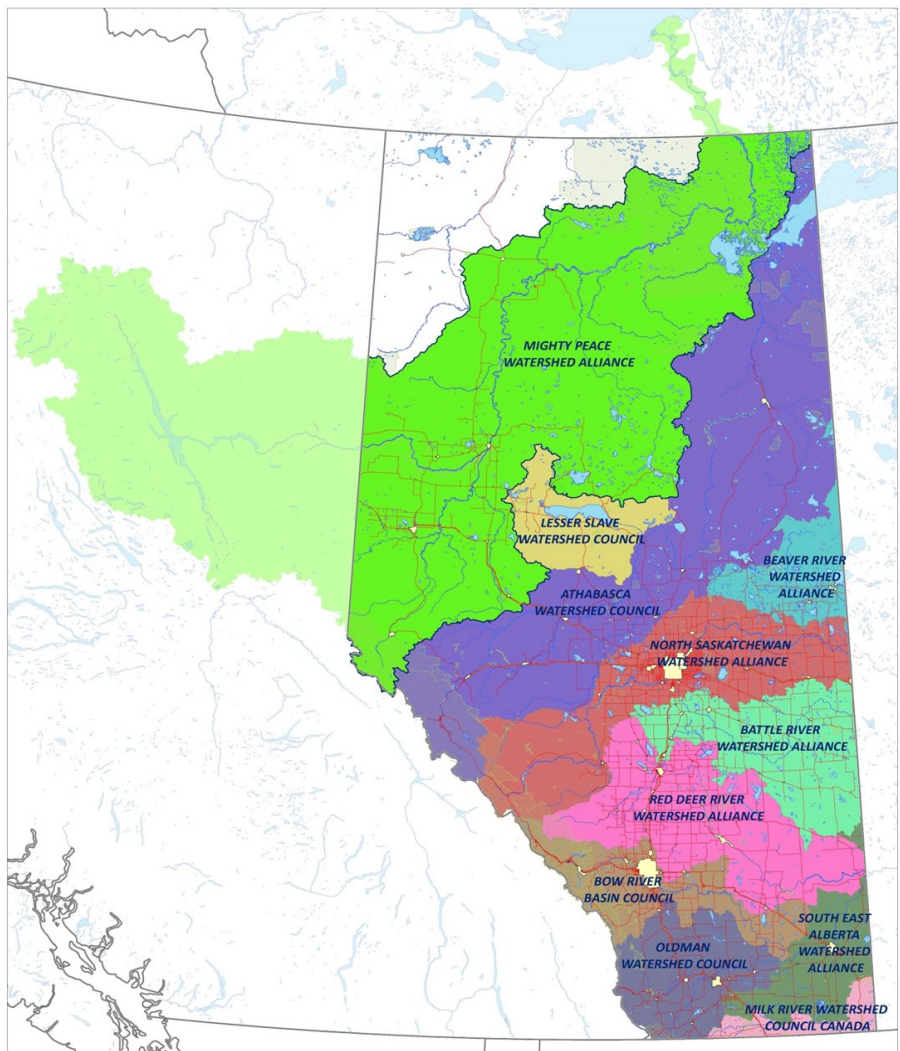
The term watershed refers to the geographic boundaries of all land that drains to a particular water body along with its ecosystem . A watershed includes groundwater aquifers that discharge to and receive discharge from streams , wetlands, ponds and lakes.

VISION

The Peace is a healthy, sustainable watershed that supports our social, environmental and economic objectives.

MISSION

To promote watershed excellence, the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance will monitor cumulative effects from land use practices, industry and other activities in the watershed and work to address issues through science, education, communication, policy and by supporting watershed stewardship.



Diverse, Responsible & Connected!

- *Diverse group of people representing diverse interests.
- *Responsible for bringing those interests together.
- *Connected to all stakeholders across the watershed area.

New Additions—New Board Members



Ian Daisley— Forestry

Ian Daisley is representing the Alberta Forest Products Association on the MPWA. As a Professional Forester he has worked for Alberta Newsprint Company in Whitecourt for the past 10 years. Mostly he supervises forestry operations, but more recently has worked in a role where he is in charge of the planning, silviculture and certification for the company.



Peter Frixel— Tourism/fisheries/ Recreation

Peter established a homestead in Clear Hills County 35 years ago. He is now retired from agricultural financing and continues to operate a small sawmill making furniture from his woodlot. He feels industry and Government can do much more in the way of value added products, forest sustainability, and recreation. He is also a Councillor for Clear Hills County, and active with the Mighty Peace Tourism Association.

Sharon Nelson—Rural Municipality



Sharon Nelson has lived in the community for over 50 years. Don and Sharon purchased their current farm northeast of Clairmont in 1977 and have raised a large family within the community. They continue to operate a mixed farm.

They built a grocery/gas bar and post office in 1988, and have provided opportunities for employment in this community ever since. She is currently involved in Bear Lake Watershed Society and Peace Airshed Zone Association (PAZA). Since 2007 as Councillor she has worked diligently on behalf of Division 2 and the County of Grande Prairie.



Jamie Rich—Public Member-at-Large

I was born and raised in High Prairie, Alberta. I grew up along the banks of the Heart River next to Winagami Lake Wildland Park. Interested in the outdoors and forested areas around High Prairie from a young age, I decided to pursue a degree in Forest Management at the University of Alberta. Upon graduation, I worked in the forestry industry in Alberta and Saskatchewan until returning to the Peace Country in 2010 to work as a project manager with Ruskin Construction in Grande Prairie. In my current role I manage the construction of bridges and crossings throughout western Canada for oil and gas, forestry, rail and government sectors. I enjoy camping, hunting and fishing in my spare time.



Norm Duval—Watershed Stewardship

I am 44 years old and live on an acreage south of Peace River. I was born and raised in the hamlet of Jean-Cote, then spent 2 years in Grande Prairie at the GPRC. With the exception of going to SAIT for 1 year and year in Fort McMurray, I have lived in the Peace Country my whole life. My wife's name is Michelle, and I have a son, Mathieu, who is 19 and a daughter, Josee, who is 17 years old. I worked for Peace River Pulp for 18 years, and now I have been with Shell Peace River Complex for 4 years. I grew up on a small farm and learned some very valuable skills that have come in handy for my Power Engineering career.

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Newsletter produce with support from ESRD

From the Chairman by Robert Cameron

By the time you read this I hope that the serious consequences that come from interrupting the smallest capillary of water's movement on the landscape in your neighbourhood have subsided - flood waters that is! The sudden jump from early spring to mid-summer temperatures have melted the last vestiges of snow and the water not soaking into the unfrozen soil is running across the landscape and encountering the lovely dams we've constructed called roads.

We've generally installed culverts that can't handle the volumes of sudden runoff from fast snowmelt or heavy rainfalls. There is a planning tool called wetted areas mapping now available that show the finest capillary of water on the landscape and how the area will drain to a particular culvert or stream crossing so that we can better size the culverts to handle all but the most extreme events. This tool based on LIDAR (laser based remote sensing technology) is being used widely in forest planning because of the very detailed resolution it provides. Stay tuned for further explanation and examples of it's use in the Peace River watershed.



Watershed Coordinator Adam Norris

There are different policies important for watershed management in Alberta. There are Land Use Frameworks, Water Management Plans and **Watershed** Management Plans, but how are they related? These are all interconnected and one way of thinking about it is to compare it to the body. The Land Use Framework is like a skeleton because it provides structure, the **Watershed** Management Plan is like ligaments and tendons because it brings all the parts together and a Water Management Plan is one of the muscles which perform a specific task. And all need to work together to function and be effective.



The Land Use Framework is an initiative of the Government of Alberta to connect all planning on the landscape together and take into account cumulative effects. Cumulative effects are the what happens as result of all things that are happening in our part of the world.



Original graphic from
<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/19/Joint.png/400px-Joint.png>

A Water Management Plan is specific to one body of water (eg., lake or river) and generally focuses on water quantity. This plan can be submitted to the government (falls under the *Water Act*), then the plan must be consulted when issuing water licenses, permits, approvals or transfers.

As a designated **Watershed** Planning and Advisory Council, the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance will produce a **Watershed** Management Plan. This plan will consider all factors that affect **watershed** health. This plan acts on the fact that the quality and quantity of water and the health of the ecosystem are inextricably tied to the land from which the water flows and attempts to manage human impacts on this defined unit. Watershed Management Plans fall under the Government of Alberta's *Water for Life* strategy, but

there are many pieces of relevant legislation including the *Municipal Government Act*, the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act* and the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*. A **Watershed** Management Plan connects many things.

Clearhills Watershed Initiative by Sherri Larsen

The Clear Hills Watershed Initiative is a grassroots, non-profit watershed stewardship group that operates within the borders of the Clear Hills County. This is a large area (15,113 sq. km) consisting of many sub-watersheds, all of which eventually drain to the Peace River basin. We began in Jan. 2007 with the goal - *to learn and understand the basic components of our watershed and its interaction with other aspects of our environment for the betterment of our community and to gain an appreciation of our natural habitat that surrounds us.*

Over the past five years, our group has accomplished this original goal through networking with organizations such as, Alberta Stewardship Network, Ducks Unlimited, Cows & Fish, Fish & Wildlife, DFO and many others at workshops, seminars and field trips. We have created a State of the Watershed Report, a five year data-base of water quality monitoring and a website www.clearhillswatershed.com. Annually we have a booth at the local trade fair, participate in AWQA days, school contests and field trips with our area schools and we just completed our fifth annual community supper where we have guest speakers in as well as share collected information with the public. Currently, we are working on a signage project for Many Islands Campground as well as a 'Naming Creeks & Streams' historical project. Future projects include doing a wetlands and riparian restoration project in conjunction with Peace Country Beef & Forage.

Our mission is - *to protect, preserve and improve water quality & quantity throughout the county through education, good water practices & water testing.*

Summary of AGM Presentation by Lorne Fitch

The presentation made 5 key points that form the “mighty truths”, which should govern our approach to the world and to watersheds. First, “what goes around comes around.” In the presentation he made the point that this principle is a measure of the collective will of communities, industry and government to work in the broad public interest for the Peace watershed and for Albertans. His second point emphasized that “Everything is Connected” saying that we as Albertans have a need to remove the barriers and silos to allow a system approach to land, air, water, resource allocation and land use. He states that we need to reduce the tendency to work in isolation, separating land from water, fish from timber and instead should join things together and work jointly with them. His third item “Everything is Additive” is that idea that nothing we do is in isolation, but the past affects the present, as our actions affect our neighbours. Cumulative effects is science’s means of interpreting this. “Diversity equals stability” is his fourth statement about the need to identify your particular assets and leverage them: Our asset is diversity. Like Alberta’s assets aren’t just singly farming, cattle, oil or lumber, but all of them together with our breathable air, clean water productive soil and abundant biodiversity educated and healthy population that provides our strength. Once these are lost, we lose our foundation. Fifth and final point “We humans are in the Loop” states that nothing happens in environmental management until people agree to behave in ways that recognize the effects of their actions. The full presentation can be found on our website.

From the Executive Director’s Desk! By Rhonda Clarke-Gauthier

The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance has just passed its 2 year anniversary! The organization was established March 2011 by interested stakeholders and then designated as the Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) for the Alberta portion of the Peace and Slave Rivers. If you wish to see what we have been doing in those 2 years, please visit our website to find all previous newsletters and annual reports. You can also find the reports from the projects we have completed throughout that time.

The future holds much work for us as we move forward to begin the “State of Watershed” (SOW) assessment report. This will be a snapshot of the condition and situations in which we currently find the watershed. This report will provide the basis for our further work of producing an Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP). We have collected a great deal of information from science sources and human experience and will now work

towards putting the information into a clear, concise format. Also, the information will be assessed by using a set group of indicators. The end of June will find the board of directors participating in a facilitated workshop to narrow down the watershed indicators which the MPWA will use for their State of Watershed report. If you are interested in seeing what these indicators may include, you can check out the document “Guide to Reporting Common Indicators Used in State of the Watershed Report”, which is posted on our website under the “links” tab.

If you or others you know have information that you feel would be important to the work of the MPWA and the upcoming State of Watershed report, please get in contact with us as soon as possible..



Have A Wonderful Summer!

Board Members

Government	Industry	Non-Governmental Organizations	Aboriginal Communities
Federal-Transboundary Relations -Abdi Siad-Omar	Agriculture -Shelleen Gerbig	Conservation/Environment -Bob Cameron	Métis Nation of Alberta -Willard Roe
Provincial -John Zylstra	Forestry -Ian Daisley	Watershed Stewardship -Norm Duval	Metis Settlement General Council -Alden Armstrong
Large Urban -Dan Wong	Oil & Gas -Wayne Kooy	Research/Education -Jean-Marie Sobze	Upper Watershed First Nation -Vacant
Small Urban -Geoff Milligan	Utilities -Ashley Parker	Public Member-at- Large (2) -Richard Keillor -Jaime Rich	Middle Watershed First Nation -Vacant
Rural Municipality -Sharon Nelson	Mining -Vacant	Tourism/Fisheries/ Recreation -Peter Frixel	Lower Watershed First Nation -Jim Webb